



News Release

U of M, Crookston to highlight Mexican Independence Day as part of Hispanic Heritage Month on Sunday, September 16, 2012

*By Itollegs on Tuesday, September 11, 2012*In recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, the University of Minnesota, Crookston is hosting a program that encompasses Hispanic history, storytelling, music, dancing, and refreshments on Sunday, September 16, 2012, the official Mexican Independence Day. The event, known as the "Celebration of Life, History, and Freedom" will take place in the Kiehle Auditorium, from 5 to 6:30 p.m. All activities are free and everyone is welcome. Refreshments will feature popular Mexican foods to sample.

Highlights of the evening will include; vocal music by Bryan Sanchez, dancing by Las Rositas, presentations on Hispanic history, the Mexican Independence Day, and the flag by area elementary and middle school students. Special presentations by Alan Dragseth, president of the board of the Red River Valley Sugarbeet Museum and area sugar beet grower, and by Leticia Sanchez, Intervention Coordinator/Supervisor, for Migrant Health Services in Crookston, will bring to life the history of Hispanics and Latinos in the Red River Valley.

Mary Farley, recipient of the prestigious 2012 Virginia McKnight Binger Awards in Human Service, will be recognized during the evening. She spent her life's work in humanitarian efforts including advocating for immigrants and children, ministering to convicts, reintegrating homeless adults into community life, and finding treatment for individuals with mental illness. For more on the award, visit www.mcknight.org.

Cristina Rodriguez, from Fresh Voices in Progress, will provide an audio visual presentation chronicling the lives and culture of Hispanics in the Red River Valley. The evening will also include information about the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act, known as the DREAM Act by the Office of Diversity & Multicultural Programs, and a featured reading by local high school student Justin Burgoz. The legislation, if passed, would affect individuals ages 15 to 31, who came to the country before they were 16 and have lived here continuously for at least the past five years. They must be free of serious criminal convictions, be enrolled in or have completed high school, or have served in the U.S. military. The presentation will provide information and help raise awareness. For more information on the DREAM Act, visit www.ed.gov.

The evening will conclude with piñatas and Mexican Bingo for kids of all ages.

Hispanic Heritage Month begins September 15, the anniversary of independence for five Latin American countries--Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, and ends Oct. 15. In addition, Mexico declared its independence on September 16 and Chile on September 18.

Today the University of Minnesota, Crookston delivers 26 bachelor's degree programs, 18 minors, and 39 concentrations on campus--as well as 10 degrees online--in the areas of agriculture and natural resources; business; liberal arts and education; and math, science and technology. With an enrollment of 1,800 undergraduates from 25 countries and 40 states, the Crookston campus offers a supportive, close-knit atmosphere that leads to a prestigious University of Minnesota degree. "Small Campus. Big Degree." To learn more, visit www.umcrookston.edu.

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